

Las Pilitas Quarry Draft Environmental Impact Report

Comments/Concerns by James Patterson

June 5, 2013

Project Description Inconsistencies

The project description in the revised CUP application and the DEIR regarding the product to be produced needs clarification as it relates directly to the amount of water required and other operations both on and off site.

Traffic and Circulation

Inadequate measures to address increased degradation of SR 58 and county roads due to increased truck traffic from the proposed quarry.

Adequacy of SR 58 to safely accommodate bicyclists, motorists and quarry related haul-truck traffic.

Failure of the DEIR to consider the cumulative traffic impact of additional development of the Santa Margarita Ranch Residential Ag Cluster and other potential development near the quarry and along the haul route.

Failure of the DEIR to adequately address the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians on SR 58, H St. and I St. in the community of Santa Margarita from increased quarry related haul-truck traffic.

Measures to enforce proposed mitigation measures and consequences for failing to implement and/or follow required mitigation measures are not identified.

Air Quality

Potential air quality degradation from haul-truck traffic that may be staging/idling in Santa Margarita and by the school is not adequately addressed.

Dust control from onsite operations is regulated through the application of water and/or dust control chemicals though specifics as to the quantity of water required and the types of chemical products used is lacking.

Measures to enforce proposed mitigation measures and consequences for failing to implement and/or follow required mitigation measures are not identified.

Biological Impacts

Should quarry operations be approved, restoration of vegetation should be consistent with pre-quarry conditions and not include the addition of non-native species.

Even though a portion of the site will be left in open space, there will be a significant loss of habitat from quarry operations throughout the life of the quarry and should be noted as a significant and unavoidable impact that is not mitigated.

The Salinas River is an impaired water body due to excessive sediment loads. Any runoff from the site that carries sediment or other foreign materials will exacerbate this condition and is a detriment to the aquatic environment. Measures to protect the river should be absolute.

Measures to enforce proposed mitigation measures and consequences for failing to implement and/or follow required mitigation measures are not identified.

Increased Risk of Wildfire

Quarry operations including blasting and the use of heavy equipment increase the risk of wildfire in a very high wildfire designated area. Additional water storage and agreeing to not store fuel on site are minimal and insufficient measures to reduce the risk of igniting a wildfire. The location of the quarry in a very high wildfire area, the long response time for emergency services, and the nature and condition of the rural roads subjects local residents, motorists and quarry employees to an unacceptable safety risk and should be noted as such.

Comments from Advisory Committees

I support the comments and concerns submitted by the Water Resources Advisory Committee, the Santa Margarita Area Advisory Committee and the CSA 23 Advisory Committee.